

DACA ANNIVERSARY

(Mr. HOYER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, this week we marked 3 years since President Obama created the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, or DACA. He did this in response to Congress' failure to pass the DREAM Act and help children of undocumented immigrants stay here and help build a better future for America.

For children who probably know no language other than English and know no country other than America, for many of these immigrants brought here as children through no fault of their own, America is the only home they have ever known. They love this country, and they deserve a chance to stay and contribute to our Nation's future.

President Obama announced an expanded DACA last year, along with the program that deals with parents of such children to help the immigrant parents of American citizens and legal residents. Unfortunately, a partisan lawsuit has held up their implementation, and Republicans have now voted three times to end this opportunity for children of immigrants. They would split families apart.

If my Republican friends wish to change our immigration policies, they have a perfect vehicle, Mr. Speaker, for doing so: a comprehensive immigration reform bill supported, in my opinion, by a majority of the House of Representatives. Let's bring such a bill to the floor so that we can fix our broken immigration system and create a pathway to citizenship for these DREAMers and others who have been living and working here for almost all their lives.

OUR DOCUMENTS OF FREEDOM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LOUDERMILK) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. LOUDERMILK. Mr. Speaker, quite often, as others have already done today, when I have come before this body, it has been to recognize someone who has done something significant in my district or to speak about a bill, whether I was for it or against it, or a piece of policy or an issue. But today I don't have pre-prepared remarks. I just wanted to remind those of us who are here of why we are here. Why do we attend sessions here in this body day in and day out? What is the purpose for our being here?

Before I begin remarks, Mr. Speaker, I would like to personally extend my thoughts and prayers on behalf of myself and my family, as well as those of the 11th Congressional District in Georgia, to those victims of the horrific attack that happened last evening in Charleston, South Carolina.

Mr. Speaker, I am a member of the Committee on Homeland Security as well as the special task force on foreign fighters, and as part of that, we spend a lot of time studying terrorism and the terrorist attacks against this Nation. One thing that I have seen that is consistent about these terrorist attacks is that they are attacking us not because of who we are. Most of them don't even know our names. They may not know our families or what we believe, and it may well be the case in Charleston, as I know it was in Garland, Texas, in the attacks there, they didn't even know their victims. But what I have seen with these attacks of terrorism is they are attacks about what we stand for, and that is freedom.

In Garland, Texas, it was an attack on the First Amendment, our freedom of speech. Last night, it was an attack on the most fundamental right that our Founding Fathers gave to us, and that is our freedom of religion, a right that, as they said, was given to us by God and cannot be taken away.

Mr. Speaker, I have had the opportunity since being in Congress a short amount of time—and it is more than an opportunity, it is really a privilege—to take constituents as they come to the Capitol here on tours. As I walk down the Halls of this building and I point out the statue of Thomas Jefferson that we have right outside the Chamber, or even as I stand here, the image of Moses is looking at me as he is looking over the Chamber, as I see the statues of our Founding Fathers, they have left us reminders of why we are here.

Mr. Speaker, as we are getting close to the great anniversary festival of the birth of this Nation, I think it is imperative and important that we as a body are reminded of why we are here. I just want to speak briefly about two phrases that you can find in Washington, D.C., that remind us not only of why we are here, but what it takes to preserve the freedom that we have been given.

Mr. Speaker, as I walked down the aisle to come to this podium, I just glanced up above the rostrum where you are standing, and I see four words, "In God We Trust." That is one of the phrases that my eyes often go to as I am sitting in this Chamber as we are debating bills. I reflect back on why do we have that phrase here?

Well, it also goes back to another phrase that I have seen recently as I was taking a tour of The Mall outside this building, where we have the museums of the heritage of this Nation. There is also a building there, the National Archives. Inside that building are the documents of freedom, the most hallowed of all of our documents: the Constitution; the Bill of Rights; and then the one that we hold the most sacred, the one that is most requested by visitors to this Nation's Capital to see, and that is the Declaration of Independence.

In that Declaration, our Founding Fathers expressed what they believed

that this Nation would be one day. It was their vision, it was their faith, and it was their philosophy about this new Nation. They were revolutionary ideas that they brought forth because it was the first time in the history of mankind that a government existed with emphasis on the freedom of individual, empowering the individual. Every other government on the face of the Earth before this had focused its attention upon a group, a collective, whether it was by their race or their religion or aristocracy or their family line. But our Founding Fathers sensed something different: if we empower the individual, if we recognize the rights that God has given them and we give them the freedom to excel and exceed, then our Nation, as a whole, would excel.

They believed that these rights were important to be protected: the right to speak freely, the right to have ideas, the right to pursue happiness, the right to pursue commerce, and the right to worship without fear of oppression from the government. These were revolutionary ideas.

They also knew that they had a challenge. Because of these revolutionary ideas, they knew that they would not be well accepted by other governments because it threatened the power base of those governments. In fact, they knew they would have to take on the most powerful military force in the history of the entire world if they were ever going to see these ideas come to fruition.

Now, think about that. This ragtag rabble of Washington's soldiers would have to take on the most powerful military force in the history of the world. It was an impossible task, and they understood that. But, Mr. Speaker, that phrase that is in marble above the rostrum reflects one of those two key phrases, because in the last line of the Declaration of Independence, our Founding Fathers wrote these words: "And for the support of this Declaration, with a firm Reliance on the Protection of divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes, and our sacred Honor."

You see, "In God We Trust" was the first element that they identified that we must have if we were going to preserve this freedom that they were fighting for.

Now, outside the National Archives, where that Declaration is still on display, are the words, "Eternal vigilance is the price of freedom."

"Eternal vigilance is the price of freedom."

You see, that is the second phrase that I think we must be reminded of today. The second part of that last line of the Declaration of Independence says, "we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes, and our sacred Honor." You see, freedom is not free, and it is held and it is protected at a price.

Just recently, I was given the opportunity to travel to the beaches of Normandy. As I stood upon the sands of

Omaha Beach, I started reflecting upon the price that was paid that day for our freedom and our liberty. I brought back a little bit of the sand from the beach, as my dad was in World War II and served in that theater. And as I sat at home right around Memorial Day, I was looking at that jar of sand, and I started thinking: What if these sands could speak? What would they say? What would they tell us in this august body here? What would they tell the people of our Nation if that sand could speak?

You see, that sand absorbed the blood of American patriots who had the courage to step off of those Higgins boats into the line of fire, and I wondered why would they do that, knowing that more than likely they would never return back home. You see, that sand absorbed the blood of these patriots.

The sand also may be able to tell us of the last words that were spoken by some of those patriots as they drew their last breath after giving their lives, their very lives, for our freedom. Would they tell the name of the father or mother as they cried out their last cry of hope?

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Would they tell the name of a sweetheart which they will never embrace or a brother or a sister or a child that they will never see?

As I started thinking about it, I started realizing that sand held the DNA of these soldiers—not just DNA of the soldiers, but the DNA of our entire Nation.

I believe today, Mr. Speaker, that, if that sand could tell us anything today in this body, it is to remember what they died for.

I believe, if that sand could speak today, that sand would tell us these words: this is why we died, because we hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal and they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that amongst these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; that to ensure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed.

As we are nearing that celebration—we celebrate 239 years of the birth of this Nation—I call upon the Members of this body to once again reflect on why we are here, and that is to preserve freedom.

Mr. Speaker, I thank you for this opportunity to speak.

I yield back the balance of my time.

ISIS CRISIS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. NEWHOUSE). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. RUSSELL) for 30 minutes.

Mr. RUSSELL. Mr. Speaker, in the last couple of weeks, America has asked what is our strategy to defeat

ISIS and what is the President's plan to prevent the spread of barbarism in Syria and Iraq?

For all of our advancement in self-governance, the rule of law, and a betterment of people's lives, the world stands in shock at beheadings, immolations, crucifixions, sexual enslavement, and human suffering as a way of governance could exist on earth today.

As the world has watched in horror, it has also looked to America. Where America leads, nations stand shoulder to shoulder; where America is absent, tyranny takes its chances and rears its ugly head—but who would have thought barbarity would emerge?

Since last year, the President has been unable to articulate his strategy to aid our ally in Iraq to combat ISIS. As a combat veteran of Iraq that has had to watch my American and Iraqi friends die, that has had to handle the flesh and blood of battle, that has had to do terrible things to destroy enemies, that has had to watch the good people of Iraq suffer in absence of effective government, this is deeply personal.

It is personal because I have lived among the Sunni Arab. I have celebrated his victories, his wedding, his birthdays, and his accomplishments. I have mourned as close Iraqi friends have died to acts of terror and mourned when Iraq's educated, intelligent, and free people have been expunged.

The President's refusal to negotiate a status of forces agreement and decision to abandon Iraq in 2012 is largely responsible and aided ISIS' path to destruction in that country.

We soldiers and servicemembers who have sacrificed so much in Iraq weep. We defeated Saddam's army, toppled the Ba'athist government, captured and brought a world tyrant to justice, fought an insurgency, and stood shoulder to shoulder with disenfranchised Sunnis and Kurds to restore control to Iraq's Government. We turned the country around with a military pause.

The President used that pause for abandonment and political expediency; where we sacrificed, he quit. I speak for so many of the Iraq veterans when I say: Mr. President, you have hurt us deeply. You have torn a hole within us. We are at a loss to see the state of Iraq today.

Now, as we ask what can be done, we see a strategy offered by this administration. I heard it yesterday in the House Armed Services Committee when Secretary of Defense Carter and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs Dempsey attempted to articulate it. I left more confused than when I entered.

The President is offering a plan without vision or conviction. Indeed, Secretary Carter could not even name it, calling it the so-called nine-line strategy. So-called? Do we not even have enough conviction to call the strategy some name? Is it our strategy or not? Are we so unsure of it that we do not even know what to call it? Then we were informed of the "lily pad strat-

egy." I suppose that is the one that makes us look like a bunch of toads.

The nine lines, if we decide to actually call it that, this strategy, when taken together, is mostly passive and defensive. In my 21 years of military infantry service, I have never seen enemies defeated by defense.

While passive measures are important, they are only complementary. The President is looking for nations in the Middle East to lead. Middle Eastern countries are looking to the United States for leadership. We cannot approach this problem like pushing a strand of wet spaghetti. Grab it by the front, and it will go where you want it to go.

If Iraq and Syria were a crime-ridden neighborhood, this nine-line strategy would be like relying on neighborhood watches to physically fight criminals and restore leadership of the town. The mayor and police would then tell them, Well, if you clean up your neighborhood, then we will come and provide the protection that you require—if only life worked that way.

The military can provide pauses, but we cannot provide an Iraqi collapse when the President pulls out all the protection necessary to sustain a nascent government. If the United States is not committed with a diplomatic, economic, and informational solution, all the heroics exerted by our men and women in uniform to provide a window will be squandered once again if we abandon our gains.

Secretary Carter and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs Dempsey spoke of trying to find people willing to fight in Iraq. There are plenty of them. The problem is they are Sunni Arabs and Kurds. They do not wish to live under ISIS; yet we will not organize them into a Sunni-Arab and Sunni-Kurd federation that would actually stand a chance of success and would be a deadly blow to the objectives of ISIS.

They want to govern themselves because Baghdad cannot include them. They do not wish to live under ISIS' barbarity, and we should embrace them.

In the interim, what can be done that is not passive? How about some of this? Cripple Raqqa. This town, it is clear, is the center of ISIS power. The President's Cabinet says: We are worried about collateral damage and civilian casualties.

News flash, the most humane thing we can do to end the suffering of hundreds of thousands of people is cripple what ISIS draws its strength from; destroy their infrastructure, hammer the electricity capacity of that city, destroy the bridges on their roads of ingress and egress, take away the oil refining installations that they possess and use to fund themselves with millions of dollars of illegal cash.

We have the ability to rebuild those later, but ISIS would be diminished deeply by their loss. The most humane thing we can do to protect civilians is defeat the barbarians, causing their